



News Release

August 24, 2016

Canadian Bottled Water Association response to media story about Ontario PPTW fees.

The conversation on water-taking permits and related fees in Ontario lacks clarity.

The "Permit to Take Water" has two components. There are those - like water bottlers - who pay the administration fee to the government program which monitors water use. This group accounts for just 5 percent of all "Permit(s) to Take Water" issued.

The remaining 95 per cent of "Permit to Take Water" holders are exempt from the fee, and pay nothing to draw from the same sources. The maximum volume permitted to be taken by all active PTTW holders totalled over 500 trillion litres in 2015. The bottled water industry accounts for 0.02 per cent of water used, and the largest water-taking permit goes to agriculture which accounts for 70 percent.

The government of Ontario is not selling water to water bottlers or other users who actually pay the fee. The stated purpose of the water-taking charge is to recover a portion of the government's costs related to administering the OWRA and other act for the purpose of promoting the conservation, protection and sustainable use and management of Ontario's waters.

It would do the conversation good if the activists accurately portrayed the situation.

The report Premier Wynne wants to review the rate charged for water taking permits, which is reported at \$3.71 per million litres. In June of 2015 British Columbia underwent a similar review of rates because protesters garnered much free media attention. The rates in British Columbia were found to be correct, and are \$2.25 per million litres.

The question emerges how is it Ontario will consider they are not charging enough, when they are already significantly higher than British Columbia?

It would be useful to know the same information in Ontario's case. Our best information is water-taking permits – bottled water included - account for just 5 percent of water used, and that the remaining 95 percent are exempt.

To put this all another way, 5 per cent of the users pay 27 per cent of the cost of administering the program while using just 1 per cent of the resource. The other 95 per cent of the users who use 99 per cent of the resource are exempt for paying the administration fee for their "Permit to Take Water".

We agree there is a need for clarity on the larger conversation on water: its use, conservation and overall long-term strategy. We suggest the activist and media focus on the bottled water industry, is missing the much bigger and much more important issues.

Our members of the Canadian Bottled Water Association know water is sacred. This value is at the heart of our Model Code (our industry standards), and our members embody this value in everyday practice.

Contact: Elizabeth Griswold

Telephone: (416) 618-1763